FBI, CIA Involvement In King Death Charged

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (UPI) — Black Leader Rev. Jesse Jackson, in Memphis for a memorial march on the 7th anniversary of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said Friday he believes the CIA and the FBI were involved in the assassination. "James Earl Ray (the convicted assassin) said that he didn't act alone and I believe him," said Jackson, president of Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity). Ray is currently serving a 99 year sentence.

About 2,000 persons took part in the King Memorial march. They made their way through many of the same neighborhoods from which King drew his followers in his marching days, their voices raised in the anthem of the civil rights movement—"We Shall Overcome." Jackson said he will ask U.S. Attorney General Edward Levy to reopen an investigation of the April 4, 1968, slaying and that he and other ministers will seek to interview Ray, who confessed in 1969 to the crime but has since said he was pressured by his attorneys into the admission of guilt.

A federal judge late last year held an eight day hearing into Ray's claims, and found them groundless.

In support of his contention, Jackson mentioned memos written by J. Edgar Hoover, the late director of the FBI, which he said outlined the role of the federal agency was to play "to disrupt, discredit or otherwise neutralize the civil rights movement." Jackson said several incidents in Memphis at the time of the murder also raised questions in his mind. He said he did not understand why so many police officers were in the area of the Lorraine Motel when a 30.06 rifle slug struck the civil rights leader and how Ray was able to leave the area and, eventually, the country.

"I believe the CIA was involved and until proven otherwise I won't change my opinion," Jackson, who makes his headquarters in Chicago, said. "The FBI was involved without a doubt, maybe more involved than the CIA.

The marchers Friday made their way to the Lorraine motel, where King met death.

At the motel, the marchers paused beneath the second story balcony where the civil rights leader and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize was standing when he was slain.